LIVING · FOR THE · FUTURE

John · Rothwell Slater

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LIVING FOR THE FUTURE

Living for the Future

A STUDY IN THE ETHICS OF IMMORTALITY

BY

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BOSTON AND NEW YORK

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY

The Riverside Press Cambridge

1916

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Published October 1916

DEDICATED TO A GREAT TEACHER

Who loved the past, labored for the present, and lived for the future:

WILLIAM RAINEY HARPER
1856-1906

"Our low life was the level's and the night's,
He's for the morning."

"Greet the unseen with a cheer."

AVE MAGISTER
SALVE IMMORTALIS
BENE SIT TIBI
VALE UBICUMQUE LABORAS
TIBI POST DECEM ANNOS
INVISO INAUDITO HAUD INCOGNITO
DISCIPULI CONCLAMANTES GRATULAMUR

LIVING FOR THE FUTURE

THE JOURNEY

As we rush, as we rush in the train,
The trees and the houses go wheeling back,
But the starry heavens above the plain
Come flying on our track.

All the beautiful stars of the sky,
The silver doves of the forest of Night,
Over the dull earth swarm and fly,
Companions of our flight.

We will rush ever on without fear;
Let the goal be far, the flight be fleet!
For we carry the Heavens with us, dear,
While the Earth slips from our feet!

JAMES THOMSON
(From *Sunday at Hampstead*)

LIVING FOR THE FUTURE

I

WITHIN a few years all of us will be thinking without brains, feeling without nerves, seeing and hearing without eyes or ears. Lacking hands and pockets, we can carry nothing with us, not even credentials of good character. All that we shall have will be what we are. Stripped of all possessions, traditions, and apologies, we shall, so it seems now, find ourselves somewhat at a loss to explain ourselves to the universe.

Yet somehow, somewhere, we shall be very much alive, more alive than we can now imagine. Let us not al-

ways speak about our *souls* when we contemplate the future. Your soul is yourself, more or less imperfectly possessed of a body which is sure to elude you in the end. Some little fiber snaps, some cell or bit of tissue protests five minutes too long against its ancient enemies, and suddenly a curious bit of machinery is stopped forever. In the temple of life there hangs a precious lamp, carefully tended for these many years by the unseen ministers of being; but now its silver cord is loosed, its golden bowl is broken. In the last brief flare of that fallen lamp you see your last of darkness. Those about you had been shaking their heads at one another, but now their heads all nod together. You wonder what they have found to agree upon after all this dis-

sent. Somebody says, "He 's gone"; but instead of that, they are suddenly gone, and you find yourself alone.

"Very well," you say to yourself, "those nerves and arteries were n't of much use to me anyway for the last five years. Most of what I really accomplished had to be done in spite of them, for they were always quarreling. Now for a free life at last. Good-bye, dust and ashes. Your feeble spark 's gone out. I thought it was night when I turned away from your cold hearth, but when I open the door I find myself outdoors in the sun. Come, let 's be off."

Now there are many ways of looking at this inevitable prospect. There is the fatalistic way — as Edgar says, in *King Lear*, —

"Men must endure
Their going hence, even as their coming hither;
Ripeness is all."

There is the way of curious and somber speculation, the anatomy of melancholy, Hamlet's way: —

"What dreams may come
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil
Must give us pause."

There is the way of studied and forced indifference, the way of those who say, "One life at a time." Walter Savage Landor, on his seventy-fifth birthday, wrote these proudly pagan lines: —

"I strove with none, for none was worth my strife.
Nature I loved, and next to Nature, Art.
I warmed my hands before the fire of life;
It sinks, and I am ready to depart."

This attitude, which seeks to be stoical, grows morbid by and by. There is an age when old friends begin to drop off faster than new ones come. "All, all are gone, the old familiar faces." Then comes the time when you go round the house at twilight, locking up unused rooms until you are fairly burdened with the keys, and are tempted to throw them away.

There is the way of religious exaltation, the way of martyr and saint and apostle — "to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord." While for the Christian it ought to be true that "to die is gain," the general sentiment of the Christian world at the present time is not altogether in keeping with scriptural teaching at this point. If Christians really believe that

death is only an incident in eternal life, separating the visible world from an invisible world of equal reality and superior opportunity, they have a strange way of showing it. Mourning is just as black, sorrow is often just as blind, among Christians as among those who profess no such comfortable faith. But the fact remains that, except when the sharpness of personal grief prevents, the Christian way of looking at man's mortality is a hopeful way. At Easter we celebrate, not the Pauline doctrine of the resurrection of the body, which is incomprehensible to many in this age, but the Platonic doctrine of the immortality of the soul, which has quietly taken its place as if it had always been a part of the Christian view of the future.

And finally, the last way of looking at this mystery is the way of superstition on the one hand, and of so-called psychical research on the other. One hesitates to class them together, for any fair-minded observer must be aware how carefully the leaders in psychical research strive to avoid those elements of credulity, fear, and commercial exploitation in the attitude of the seeker toward the unknown which make up what we call superstition. Psychical research deserves the respect even of those who see no use in it and have no use for it; superstition does not. Yet the two have this in common, that they tend to subordinate the plain duties, the main business of life, to a study of that which is hidden. They are both absorbed in an inquisitive and over-

anxious search for whispers in the darkness.

One sits in his little amateur wireless laboratory, listening for wandering flashes from the ships at sea; and now and then he hears the cross-currents crackling in the air from amateurs like himself. There are many of them "listening in," and some of them, he suspects, sending out spurious messages. Sometimes in a great storm there is a strange humming in his ears, as if unknown, powerful currents of the upper air were interfering with his aërial. And once, when the night was very still, he thought he heard one of the great Government stations on the Isthmus calling Arlington; but whether the call came from the land or from the ocean side, he could not tell. He only

knows that the air is full of voices, and that for most of them his little toy apparatus is totally inadequate. He does not conclude that there is nothing there, but rather that there is too much for man as yet to comprehend, or even to apprehend. In other words, those who have looked longest and most patiently into the alleged phenomena of psychical research are, on the one hand, the readiest to admit the marvels of intercommunication between the minds of living men across wide spaces, and, on the other hand, profoundly skeptical of the existence of any real evidence for communication with the spirit world.

Now it may be interesting for once to dismiss all these ways of looking at the future — the fatalistic way, the mor-

bid, agnostic way, the stoic, the devout, the occult—and to consider this most tremendous of all subjects from a new angle.

II

Upon the threshold of such an inquiry, does any one have the feeling that these thoughts are uncanny, unwholesome, unwise? Is it morbid for an immortal being to look more than thirty or forty years ahead? We do that when we are taking out life insurance, or making a long lease, or writing a will. In youth we feel immortal, and will have no bounds to our domain. Can it be that as years come and wisdom widens, the wise man ought to accustom himself to shorter instead of longer views? Why climb, except for the hope of seeing far? Hamlet, though not unaware of the danger of "thinking too precisely on the event," yet speaks

with assurance of the duty of man to face the future without dismay: —

> "Sure he that made us with such large discourse,
> Looking before and after, gave us not
> That capability and god-like reason
> To fust in us unused."

Or, if it be not morbid, is it, as some seem to think, irreverent to speculate beyond the meager revelation of conventional religion? Is it profane to turn from the earthly altar, where we think we worship God, to gaze up that winding stairway by which our friends have ascended into the unknown? Is there not also a great altar there?

We find it profoundly stimulating to study in anthropology and in history the question, whence we have come. Why should it be either dispiriting or unspiritual to study, wherever and however we

may, the equally interesting question, whither we are going? In this world of destiny much depends upon whether we stand weakly waiting for destiny to come and find us, or march boldly forward to meet it in the open. Lack of complete information about the future is no reason for indifference, nor is the lack of adequate means of getting information. We are all looking further than we can see, hoping more than we can prove, and attempting more than we can finish; if we are not, we are dead already, and somebody had better tell us so. At sea the lookout ahead is doubled in foggy weather. What a fool that captain would be who called in the watch because the heavy curtain of ocean mist shut out the horizon. In our attitude toward all the other secrets of the universe, the less we

can see the harder we look. Here alone, because we can prove nothing, we are asked to refrain from reasonable inference and useful hypothesis.

This demand for a prohibition of all speculative inquiry concerning the future must be denied. We are not to shut our eyes when the way grows obscure; that is neither faith nor common sense. "Man goeth to his long home." He knows it, and has always known it. He knows not where that home may be, but he knows that he is a pilgrim. It is useless for him to pretend otherwise. Austin Dobson gives us the picture in his couplet: —

> "Time goes, you say; ah, no,
> Alas, time stays; we go."

But why "alas"? Lorado Taft, our idealist sculptor, sees no melancholy in the poet's verse. He has made it the theme of

a great sculptural group which will some day find a place in Washington Park, Chicago, at the western end of the broad boulevard called the Midway Plaisance. His Fountain of Time, of which models have already been exhibited, will represent the heroic figure of Time overlooking the vast, hurrying procession of mankind. Out of a jet of water rise infant forms, who turn their childish footsteps after the youths and maidens that have preceded them. In the center of the long column are warriors, horsemen, strong men and beautiful women, all marching forward with heads erect and banners floating. Beyond them are the bending shoulders of the aged and the halting footsteps of those who are about to sink back to the earth from which they came. But all, all — the children, the youths, the

heroes, and the grandsires every one — are gazing forward toward some goal they cannot see. This vision it is that keeps them marching; and for it, we may be sure, Time envies them their eternity.

It is not the brief cycle of the body, dust to dust, but this long straight line of the soul's vision, that will make Lorado Taft's fountain a work of prophetic genius when it is some day embodied in marble; not the dust, rising in transient foam and falling in vanishing spray, but the spirit that endures as seeing that which is invisible; man the unconquerable, man the imperishable, man the explorer and the heir of eternity.

"Time goes, you say; ah, no,
Thank God, time stays; we go."

There is then no theoretical ground upon which we need hesitate to consider the subject of living for the future. If there were any practical ground, it would be the fact that under a superseded theology Christian people once thought so much of the future that they forgot the present and its duties. That is no longer true. The pendulum has swung so far the other way that to listen to some of our preachers one would almost think they were as much ashamed of heaven as they have long been politely skeptical of hell. The gospel of the kingdom is now so nearly identified in some quarters with model tenements, district nurses, and eugenics, that one wonders if hygiene and holiness are the same thing. Religion has done so much during the past thirty years to make this

world a better place to live in that some of us have become curiously indifferent to the relative values of sociology and character. Cleanliness is indeed next to godliness, whatever the mediæval church may have thought about it; but it does not follow that a daily bath is a complete substitute for the holy communion.

It is to be hoped that Christianity may succeed in bringing into the industrial world enough of unselfishness (or of enlightened selfishness, whichever it may be) to insure the success of profit-sharing and the living wage and other correctives for economic inequalities. But we may find then that neither employers nor employed have thereby added materially to the store of heavenly treasures. No one doubts that to abolish bad drain-

age or improve the milk supply is a Christian act; but it may have less than we suppose in common with the real elevation of mankind. Both in sanitation and in scientific and mechanical efficiency this age is immeasurably superior to all preceding centuries. Yet it has not been shown that in intellectual efficiency or spiritual quality we can even equal the past.

Such reflections diminish in no sense the value of the social emphasis in contemporary Christianity, but they do lead us to inquire whether the loss of the long look forward and upward is not to be regretted. Let us agree that our ancestors thought too much about the future and too little about the present. Let us agree that for practical purposes it is best to live chiefly as if we were prepar-

ing to leave the earth a better place than we found it. But let us also give ourselves the pleasure now and then of a brief excursion into the world where we shall all be when men celebrate the centenary of the great war, and of the great peace that we hope shall follow. What sort of world must it be? And what bearing has that world upon this?

John Ruskin complained, in the introduction to "The Crown of Wild Olive," of "the difficulty of knowing whether to address one's audience as believing or not believing in any other world than this." He said:—

"If you address any average modern English company as believing in an eternal life, and then endeavor to draw any conclusions from this assumed belief as

to their present business, they will forthwith tell you that 'What you say is very beautiful, but it is not practical.' If, on the contrary, you frankly address them as unbelievers in eternal life, and try to draw any consequences from that unbelief — they immediately hold you for an accursed person, and shake off the dust from their feet at you. . . . The dilemma is unavoidable. Men must either hereafter live or hereafter die; fate may be bravely met, and conduct wisely ordered, on either expectation, but never in hesitation between ungrasped hope and unconfronted fear. We usually believe in immortality so far as to avoid preparation for death; and in mortality so far as to avoid preparation for anything after death. Whereas the wise man will at least hold himself ready for one or other

of two events of which one or other is inevitable, and will have all things ended in order for his sleep, or left in order for his awakening."

III

In the following inquiry, which assumes the belief in immortality as a starting-point, images derived from the Scriptures will be deliberately avoided, for the sake of whatever freshness of apprehension may come from studying an old subject from a new angle. Furthermore, the speculations of spiritualism, theosophy, and other systems that have their center in the invisible world will not be examined or criticised. Our purpose is not philosophical but practical; not metaphysical but ethical. There are several things about the future life that seem absolutely certain, provided we believe in personal immortality at all. That belief, of course, is a matter not of

proof but of faith or of intuition; and the correctness of it is not an issue in the present discussion. Readers who expect to find here any arguments in support of immortality itself will be disappointed. But readers who believe in personal immortality, without being able to attach to that belief any sense of reality or any practical consequences, may perhaps be led into certain inferences, conjectures, and hopes, that will be not without interest for the intellectual and the moral life.[1]

[1] Although the inquiry is not metaphysical, two philosophical objections are likely to occur to some readers of these pages. In the first place, the language used may at times seem to imply a dualistic view of the universe, in which matter and spirit, or mind, are regarded as two separate and more or less antagonistic entities. Such a misapprehension of the writer's position would be due to the limitations of language in dealing with fundamental questions in a non-technical way. It is not easy to see what part that which we colloquially call "matter" can have in a spiritual

Our reasoning will be altogether deductive or *a priori* inference from the

world; and from this point of view a spiritual being, deprived of his physical body and continuing to exist, might be thought of as pure spirit unrelated to matter. But of course the universe is really not a duality but a unit; matter is probably only the manifestation of the divine as Force, while mind is the manifestation of the divine as Consciousness. And a new organization of forces, dominated by laws partly unknown to us at present, may serve the individual soul in the future life as his means of impression and expression, his "spiritual body." Instead of a greater gap than now appears to exist between mind and matter, there may be a higher synthesis. The subject involves so many profound metaphysical problems, over which wise men have pondered for ages, that one could not hope to do more here than to enter a *caveat* against the charge of dualism. It is perhaps unnecessary to add an even more emphatic disclaimer of pantheism. In view of the deliberate avoidance in this essay of Christian doctrines about human destiny, it may be well, however, to say that the whole discussion is based on the reality of what we call personality, and that personality implies a personal God.

Again, the argument from analogy, here so widely used, may be attacked on the ground that we are so utterly ignorant of the nature of the invisible world that no attempted analogy can carry any force, not even a probability or a plausible hypothesis. The objection is a grave one; and if anything approaching philosophical demonstration were here attempted, it

assumed and implied meanings of the two words "personal immortality." That these speculations can ever be checked by any sort of credible confirmation from the other side is highly doubtful. There is no commoner observation made by those who examine the alleged communications from the spirit world than that their uniform triviality forbids us to consider them seriously, even if no other question were raised. In the main, the criticism is justified.[1] While scientific investigation of the so-called psychic phenomena is both inter-

would be fatal. But we start with the postulate of personal immortality, and must inevitably attach to the terms such meanings as the present world gives us. If one rejects the postulate, and prefers to substitute for personal immortality either annihilation or a merging of the individual soul into the divine, he will of course not care to read beyond this point. The argument from analogy, precarious as it is, is the only form of reasoning that can yield even speculative results here.

[1] But see below, page 129, footnote.

esting and indirectly valuable to the world, we seem not yet to have derived from it any atom of proved fact regarding the nature of immortality. Indeed, many who would be glad to think otherwise feel obliged to deny that any confirmation of immortality itself can be found by the unbiased mind in all the curious records of more than thirty years of organized collection of data in this field. Such fascinating books as that of the late F. W. H. Myers on "Human Personality and Its Survival of Bodily Death," and Henry Holt's "On the Cosmic Relations," derive their chief interest for many a thoughtful reader from their searching and often brilliant analysis of the inner life as lived in the body, rather than from any of the occult marvels which they relate or the theo-

ries based thereon. After all such reading one is left with a disappointed, but still with an open mind. Hamlet, who was a charter member of the Society for Psychical Research, and lived and died in its service, has summed it all up in the familiar lines,—

"There are more things in heaven and earth,
Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy."

But in this discussion nothing will be based on occult speculation. We are here interested to examine solely those implications concerning immortality which arise from what we know of personality and personal life. Assuming that we shall survive as persons, what follows?

IV

In the first place, our future life will not be idle. Instead of repeating the rather trite and tasteless witticisms at the expense of a heaven where rest and worship are eternal, we may simply ask for a candid answer to these questions: "Do you want immortality with nothing to do? If it were offered you on those terms, would you not find a way of refusing it? Would you not rather be extinguished than exist forever in a world full of idle saints?"

The questions answer themselves. Life, the life of the soul as well as of the body, is in its very nature rhythmical. It is made up not altogether either of effort or of relaxation. There is the

work and the play and the rest. After the sleep there is the waking, after the hour of calm and contemplation the day of struggle and of victory. However it may be with the oriental mystic, religion for us is only half renunciation and communion. The other half is the realization of the higher self through effort. If we are assuming a "personal immortality," both terms of the assumption forbid an idle heaven. For personality demands effort to resist the constant tendencies toward degeneration and impersonality; and immortality, which is only another name for life, must, *if it be anything like the life we know*, represent a permanent resistance to the forces of spiritual mortality. There must, if the soul really lives hereafter and is not merely preserved or embalmed in an

arrested state, be an endless spiritual integration, in order to prevent the far easier disintegration that so easily overtakes us. This is by no means a sinister suggestion that we may have to carry into another world our weary struggle against moral failure and collapse; it is only a reminder that if heaven be, as most of us think, a place of moral progress and improvement, it must also be a place of moral effort. In some form or other, the discipline and the delight of work must not be altogether lacking.

What a disappointing heaven it would be, if we should find when we got used to it that all the really interesting work belonged to the angels; that whenever a messenger was to be sent somewhere to avert a danger or to announce a joy, the task was assigned to an impossibly

perfect being who had never lived on earth, and so had never really done anything to earn the coveted privilege of work! If this sounds flippant, one may put it in more decorous words, but somehow the question must be answered: "Is it not certain that a future life worth having will give us something to do that is worth doing, and supply us with the means to do it?"

V

In the second place, if the future life is not to be an idle life, its activities must be such as belong to the realm of the spirit.

By the spirit (or soul) will be meant throughout this discussion *all of the mind that can survive physical death.* We are not here raising the grave question how any of the mind can remain after the loss of the brain, which has seemed to be its organ. That in itself is a staggering thing to believe, but most of us do believe it, nevertheless. We believe it as a matter of faith; and the whole of the present inquiry is nothing more than an attempt, not to defend that faith by reasoning, but to apply

reason to the analysis, the illustration, the imaginative development of a belief which must itself be taken for granted.

A very large part of the mystery and gloom with which some religious people surround this whole subject is due to an untenable and impossible psychology. Many persons have a feeling, which they have never put into words, and would perhaps be slow to confess, that somehow the only part of them that can survive death is the specifically religious instinct. They think of the soul as that part of their total personality which is supposed to be active chiefly on Sunday mornings, and when they are saying their prayers and reading their Bibles. The notion is about on a par with the idea of heaven that most of us acquired in childhood, as a place up in the sky

near the stars. Both are illogical survivals from a type of religion which has itself well nigh disappeared, wherein spiritual experience was divorced from daily life. It is unthinkable to-day that there can be such a thing as a soul or spirit in man which is independent of his intelligence, his feeling, his will.

The fact that the Greek and the Latin languages have separate words for soul and spirit, as well as various words for the different functions of the mind, has tended to confuse and embarrass our modern thought. In popular usage, and in this present discussion, the words "soul" and "spirit" are practically synonymous. It is possible, even in English, to make a distinction between them in a philosophical vocabulary, but unnecessary and over-subtle in ordinary

speech. But all of us feel that between them on the one hand and the word "mind" on the other there is some sort of difference. When we speak of the mind, we use it as a collective name for all those thoughts, feelings, and volitions which appear in the stream of consciousness at one time or another; many of them trivial, many of them almost or entirely automatic, many of them entirely dependent on the bodily functions. When we speak of the soul, we do not think, as the ancients did, of some subtle vital principle or essence. We do not think of the spirit as a breath or a vapor. We think rather, in either case, of that which is *dominant* in personality, the higher feelings, the higher ideals, the immediate intuitions of truth, and most of all, the will.

It is both interesting and important to observe that when we speak of the "souls" of men whose higher feelings are very low, whose ideals are sensual, whose intuitions of truth, if they have any, are rudimentary, and whose dominant control is not will but impulse, we mean by that word their assumed *capacity* for a spiritual growth which can arise only from a mental stimulus. About all the "soul" such a man seems to have is a dormant and undeveloped will, which can be aroused only through his dormant recollections, his perverted imagination, his blunted feelings. In him the soul is apparently only a very small and insignificant part of the mind, and derives its supreme importance in the moral world from the mysterious power of the hidden

seeds of goodness to germinate and grow in any soil.

What we must for the moment dwell upon is that those higher aspects of consciousness, those factors of personality, which we call the soul, and believe to be immortal, can by no means be separated from what we call the mind. Remember how closely the dawn of religious experience in the normal life is associated with the physical and psychical changes of childhood and adolescence. Consider how inseparably the spiritual experiences of mature life are connected on the side of religious aspiration with such mental experiences as those of imagination and memory, in the recollection of past events and in the emotional effects upon us of poetry, music, painting, and architec-

ture; and equally connected on the side of conduct with the duties, the problems, the physical and mental crises of the individual and of society. A soul which had lost all its powers of contact with the rich and wonderful treasures of memory and imagination, which could no longer perceive and conceive and reason as we do (or in some better way), would be no friend of ours. He might be an angel, but we do not want to be angels. We want to be ourselves.

VI

If it is the whole man, the real person, that survives the death of the body, then it ought to be evident to any one that an immortality which preserves only the one religious function of adoration or worship is impossible, and, to the healthy mind, undesirable. If "congregations ne'er break up, and Sabbaths have no end," many of us besides the traditional small boy would ask to be excused. If we could not look forward to Monday morning, we had rather stop at Saturday night.

Frank speech on this subject may indeed offend sensitive ears long used to the traditional platitudes. It may also trouble the souls of those whose inner

life is so wholly and genuinely saintly that the heaven of Milton or of Dante is really thinkable and congenial to them. All that one can reply to the one class is that if we had more frankness about our future it would be much better for our present; and to the other, that if we were all saints, the saintly future of devout mediæval imagination would doubtless seem as attractive to us as it did to the monkish author of "Jerusalem the Golden." A Cardinal Newman can write, and his rapt disciples can understand, a "Dream of Gerontius." But if we really believe, as we seem to, that the invisible world is full of people who were not while on earth primarily given to religious ecstasy, but rather to the plodding pursuit of homely duty, we must make a

place for them in our speculations. And as these plain people are in the majority in this world, they can hardly be treated as exceptional in the next.

It cannot be irreverent to try to conceive of a sort of heaven where our dear friends the beloved physician, the busy man of affairs, the scholarly scientist, the soldier, the college athlete, the restless boy, the home-loving mother, the playful child, have been happy and busy through all the long years since they left us behind. If we are to think of them all as living still their own lives, doing their own best work, playing their own best play, being their own best selves, then we must think of them as having carried with them all of memory, all of reason, all of the curiosities and interests and sympathies and

helpful ministries of whatever sort that made them what we loved and honored here. That is why we are led to think that the spirit which is immortal is nothing less than the mind, minus only that part of mental life clearly temporary because dependent on the body.

VII

But to say that the spirit is nothing less than the mind — with the exception just noted — is not to say that the spirit is nothing *more* than the mind as we know it. If it were, what could we hope for the future of those whose minds have given way under the strain of life, or those others whose minds were from the beginning clouded and incapable of education? Have they no souls? Is there no immortality for the innocent victims of disease, the helpless tools of crime? These darker mysteries might well appal us if we were to make the fatal error of identifying soul and brain, or brain function. But who that has not witnessed some of the miracles

of subconscious life suddenly brought to the surface in hours of crisis can realize how much more the spirit may be than the conscious mind as we ordinarily know it? What vast reservoirs of spiritual sympathy and endurance may not lie hidden beneath the commonplaces of our little days; what wonders of patience beneath the worn-out nerves, what hidden purity below the polluted surface, what undiscovered heroism in the defeated, what unused strength in the weak, what hopes of salvation in the lost, what light behind the darkness, what life within the dead?

This hidden life, this real life of the soul, which we see here only as by lightning-flashes in a storm, is a wonderful thing. Life itself is the great surprise, the unguessed secret, "the undis-

covered country from whose bourne no traveler returns." For all those who really understand life have left it, and left it without revealing its ultimate meaning. If we could read all its mysteries, we could have heaven here and now. The human mind is the true Apocalypse of God, and out of it or nothing must be made the New Jerusalem. It is too precious to be lost, too full of worth to be laid away like an outworn garment, too eternal to be altogether bound to Time.

"All we have willed or hoped or dreamed of good shall exist,
Not its semblance, but itself; no beauty, nor good, nor power
Whose voice has gone forth, but each survives for the melodist
When eternity affirms the conception of an hour."

VIII

We have already reasoned from the nature of personality that the future life must be an active, not an idle life, and that its activities must be such as belong to the spirit. We have enlarged the vague popular conception of the spirit to include all that is highest in the mind. Now we must inquire what kind of activities can belong to a spirit without a physical body.

Notice that it is the physical body only that we must learn to do without. Who can doubt that the spirit will be somehow equipped with senses more acute, and means of expression more accurate and more powerful, than any of which we know? A spirit able to

know but not to tell, able to wish but not to do, sensitive to force but incapable of exerting force, would deserve our pity, not our admiration. If the immortals, in the presence of mightier powers than we have yet perceived, lack even such humble efficiency as goes with human hands and lips, they are but souls in prison; and that we may be quite sure they are not. For immortality is only another name for freedom. But of what sort the "spiritual body" may be, what forces it may control, what limitations it may have, what relations it may sustain to the world of time and space which is all we know, are questions quite beyond the scope of this discussion. Knowing only that the physical body must be left behind, we can still speculate not un-

profitably on the question how far a spirit can be thought of as active without a literal voice for speech or a fleshly hand for labor.

It is not so hard a question as it was a generation ago. We live in the age of wireless — the wireless telegraph, the wireless telephone, wireless transmission of electrical power. When the human voice can be heard from the banks of the Potomac to the Eiffel Tower, and its echoes roll half way round the world to Honolulu, telepathy no longer seems an impossible violation of natural law. Force acting across space without any medium save the hypothetical ether that no chemist will ever find is a commonplace to-day. Mind acting across space through the same medium, or without any medium save mind itself, is not so

wild a dream as it seemed even twenty years ago. Much is here possible that is yet unproved, and perhaps unprovable. So far as the evidence is concerned, all that can be said is that occasional genuine instances of minds acting upon minds at a long distance have not been plausibly explained as coincidences; and that mind-reading at short distances, however explained, is accepted as a fact by nearly all who have themselves witnessed the phenomena.

But what I have reference to here is something much less obscure and less debatable. You get a letter from your friend, and your whole life is changed. Changed by what? By the letter? By the ink and the paper? Absurd. Changed entirely by your own motives and personal history, which really had deter-

mined your destiny even before the letter came? Equally absurd. Changed, then, by your own powerful image in memory and imagination of your friend, freshly raised to the focus of consciousness by the stimulus of the letter — so, really, changed by yourself after all? Often, of course, it is so. But who has not felt, if only once or twice, the invisible hand upon the shoulder, the inaudible whisper in the soul, that is something altogether outside the self, that commands the self, and draws it away from the compelling past and toward the mysterious future? Who does not know the difference between the commonplace feeling, "I am thinking of my friend," and the rare and utterly different feeling, "He is thinking of me"?

May one go further, and tread upon holy ground? May one ask you what you knew to be true when you found, after the gates of silence had closed upon your friend, some written word of his meant for your eye alone, some last message, some treasured memento, some ultimate revelation of unsuspected love? Could you say only in that hour, "So he thought last month, last year, so he loved, so he hoped, so he wished to help, but could not then because he feared to be misunderstood"? Some of us can say more. We can say, "So he thinks and loves and hopes now. So he helps me now, from those hills whence cometh all my help."

It is not only of the divine that we may use Matthew Arnold's phrase, "a power not ourselves that makes for

righteousness." There is an influence that comes to us unawares, a hush of the spirit, a high summons like a bugle, a solemn reminder like a bell; a strange joy that sends us singing through the day. These are the things we feel and do not tell. There ought to be many things we feel and do not tell, for only so perhaps can we keep well filled the spiritual reservoirs that feed the streams of life. May it not be that the things which they who have gone from us feel and do not tell are among the things that keep us going? May it not be that those hours of exaltation to which we look forward and backward along our way are in part our times of sharing the rich, deep wisdom of the dead?

Who knows, indeed, but that the rea-

son why the immortals speak to us only through their eloquent silence is that they have too much to say? What have words to do with perfect love? At Christmas time, when something of childish magic comes back to grace the little festivals of the home, when sparkling snow and twinkling candles lighten the eyes of old and young together, may it not be that there is one among us whom we see not, who is not known in the breaking of bread, who stands beside the hearth and beside the table, and hallows all, as indeed she used to do, and has always done?

At Easter, your soul rises again. Who lifts it? Are there not many hands that beckon, and many voices that swell your resurrection choral? Has not God invisible helpers, who know best how to

reach your heart and mine and make us better? "This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." When shall we begin to put it on, and how, if there be not some few who already wear the white garments of eternity, and can show us how to weave heaven out of earth? It may be fancy and it may be fact, that some of us, if we are ever saved, will be saved by the patience of our unseen friends.

Of the activities possible, then, in a spiritual world, the first and perhaps the greatest may be the silent influence for good upon other spirits, in both worlds. Influence for good is a very broad term. It may mean the enlightenment of error, the reinforcement of weakness, the steady, persistent re-

minder of past privilege and aspiration. Matthew Arnold understood this when he wrote: —

"We cannot kindle when we will
The fire which in the heart resides;
The spirit bloweth and is still,
In mystery our soul abides.
But tasks in hours of insight willed
Can be through hours of gloom fulfilled."

Hours of insight; hours sometimes of a purely intellectual insight, when the worth of the moral ideal is suddenly and briefly revealed in all its beauty. But hours often when your good angel says, "Remember!" You ask in vain, whether in petulance or in prayer, "Remember what?" The answer comes only as before, like a distant bell that sounds the passing hours, "Remember, remember!" It is life's warning signal, eter-

nity's cipher message to time, the future's summons to the present. There are many that send that message to us by night and by day; many that live beyond the mountains, and some that sleep beyond the sea; all of them friends.

John Masefield, in one of his poems on the war, has said: —

"If there be any life beyond the grave,
It must be near the men and things we love,
Some power of quick suggestion how to save,
Touching the living soul as from above.

"An influence from the earth from those dead hearts
So passionate once, so deep, so truly kind,
That in the living child the spirit starts,
Feeling companioned still, not left behind."

George Eliot wrote, "What makes life dreary is the want of motive." She

might have added that the want of motive in the popular conception of immortality makes it even drearier than life. Her own adequate motive for this world was duty for duty's sake, duty viewed as self-conquest, self-renunciation, resistance to instinct and desire; and for the next world she hoped, rejecting as she did the definitely personal immortality of the Christian faith, for a humble and indistinguishable voice in that which she beautifully called "the choir invisible." In her poetic thought the dead survive in memory; they are revived when we remember them and are inspired by their example. They

> "live again
> In minds made better by their presence; live
> In pulses stirred to generosity,
> In deeds of daring rectitude, in scorn

For miserable aims that end with self,
In thoughts sublime that pierce the night like stars,
And with their mild persistence urge man's search
To vaster issues."

According to such a view the dead, though dead indeed, may through memory and history yield motives to living souls who otherwise might perish of inertia. But in a far less vague and unsatisfying sense we, who believe in personal immortality, may think of the future as a time when it may be our duty, our privilege, our delight, to give back to earth in spiritual energy what heaven has given us here.

To suppose, as we commonly do, that such wordless, subtle communication from one human spirit to another is impossible, or belongs among the improb-

able speculations of poets and mystics, is really a very dangerous and radical doubt. Our belief in the reality of prayer as spiritual communion with the unseen might be gravely undermined or destroyed by a general denial at this point. For, so far as we know, it may not be the mere omnipotence of God that makes him able to communicate immediately with us through prayer; it may be just the fact that he is a spirit. Perhaps some of those who lightly brush aside the suggestion of telepathy among the living, and of any kind of spiritual influence of the invisible world upon the visible, might think twice about it if they perceived that their objection, when it is *a priori*, verges upon materialism, and tends to make prayer and worship irrational.

LIVING FOR THE FUTURE

Let us admit frankly that there is no objective evidence whatever for the speculation that the spirits of the dead may be near the living, aiding and encouraging them without articulate messages. It is only a guess; but, in view of all the analogies, not an unwarranted guess. Tennyson did not believe in the reality of spirit messages, but he wrote, in "In Memoriam":—

"Be near me when my light is low,
When the blood creeps, and the nerves prick
And tingle; and the heart is sick
And all the wheels of Being slow.

. . . . . .

"Be near us when we climb or fall;
Ye watch like God the rolling hours
With larger, other eyes than ours,
To make allowance for us all."

And if the undying do indeed so watch

and guard the living, it must be, as Tennyson said, that they "make allowance for us all." They know our frame; they remember that we are dust.

IX

We are considering the possible activities of a purely spiritual world, and the first that has suggested itself to us has been the silent communication of spiritual refreshment and energy to the living. What other occupations may there be in the life of the future?

Surely, for one thing, there will be the occupation of discovery, the joy of finding out that which is new. Robert Browning wrote to his wife in that perfect love-poem entitled "By the Fireside,"—

> "Think, when our one soul understands
> The great Word which makes all things new—

When earth breaks up and Heaven expands —
How will the change strike me and you
In the House not made with hands?"

And it was also Browning, who is, even more than Tennyson, the poet of immortality, who wrote of the wonders we shall perhaps behold

"when there dawns a day
If not on the homely earth,
Then yonder, worlds away,
Where the strange and new have birth,
And power comes full in play."

This occupation of discovery is perhaps not for all; it is for the young, and for those who are young at heart. Peter Pan remarked naïvely, as the waters of the lagoon crept up his little rock and threatened to sweep him away, "To die will be an awfully big adventure." The words came naturally

to the lips of a friend of Peter Pan, Charles Frohman, on that fateful May afternoon when he stood calmly on the sinking deck of the doomed Lusitania. "Why fear death?" he said to a young actress who stood beside him. "It is the most beautiful adventure of life." To him, the man of large enterprise, the friend of actors, himself an actor at heart, the moment had thrilling dramatic interest. It was what theatrical people call "a good curtain." A "good curtain" is an ending for one act that leaves the spectator stirred by its adequate climax, but eager for the beginning of the next act. Charles Frohman's particular work and play in this life had been to discover genius. It was his profession to discover a girl and make out of her a star. Some other

man's business is to discover a star and make out of it a friend.

Here is a chemist who will never be content until he knows the whole truth about the behavior of the atoms within the molecule. One such died not long ago after a long life of more than four score years, mostly spent in college teaching; and at the end, as he thought over the quiet past and the unknown future, he said to those about him, thinking perhaps of the students he had been used to watch from his window overlooking the campus, "Tell them this is my commencement day." Having received from the University of Life its last graduate degree, he proposed to begin a new career of original research.

What is the future going to do with the restless traveler, who has crossed

all the deserts and sailed the seven seas, yet hears like Kipling's explorer the call of the unknown: —

"Something hidden. Go and find it. Go and look behind the ranges —
Something lost behind the ranges. Lost and waiting for you. Go!"

One cannot help asking in what new fields of celestial romance and endeavor such pioneering spirits will continue their great adventure. Stevenson has given us in the "Requiem" his thought of the ultimate content: —

"Home is the sailor, home from sea,
And the hunter home from the hill."

That is a beautiful thought for all whose wandering has been only exile. Stevenson was a landsman at heart, and it is well that he wanders no more. But many of the old vikings preferred

the sea-burial to the cairn upon the hill. Captain Scott sleeps better beneath the frozen ground of his Antarctic new-found-land than he could even in an English churchyard. But upon what strange seas shall his soul discover God anew, as the great stars circle forever about his southern pole? Where sails Columbus now? Raleigh and Drake, Sir John Franklin, David Livingstone — what heavenly frontiers have they not explored? It is vain to seek for Ulysses among the home-keeping ghosts of Hades. He is not there; he is still afloat, where Dante and Tennyson have sighted him, sailing toward the setting sun: —

"It may be that the gulfs will wash us down;
It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,
And see the great Achilles, whom we knew."

Who would condemn the Happy Warrior to the punishment of eternal peace, or consign the untiring student of the stars, the molecules, the crystals, or the cells, to a paralyzed heaven of completed knowledge? We are pretty deep in the mazes of unprofitable speculation when we begin to inquire what there will be left to discover after the first surprises of the future life are over. But if anything is sure, on the basis of analogy and reasonable inference, it is that heaven will not be like the morning after Christmas, when all the toys have lost their novelty and are laid away. We hope and believe that it will not be like the end of the play, when the curtain falls and the garish house-lights shut out our vanished dream. If life be illusion, and death the door to a dull and final

reality, some of us would prefer to carry the illusion with us into oblivion. Better to fail, better to forget, than suddenly to know all and never to learn any more. One would rather watch forever beside the Sphinx amid the desert sands than to be told the answer to her riddle, if that answer explained everything. For man is a question rather than an answer; and his immortality must be something more than a reply.

One sometimes thinks we know too much rather than too little here; the wisest of men set a child in the midst of his disciples. Perhaps it is because we know too much — too much that is only half true, or not true at all, that we spend our years as a tale that is told. Life grows dreary because it grows uninteresting. We have had our look behind

the scenes, and tire of the play because we cannot forget the painted canvas and the ropes. I am not at all sure that the Greeks were not right about it when they invented Lethe, the waters of forgetfulness. Perhaps a cool bath of oblivion for the worldly-wise, the disillusioned, the blasé, would not be a bad thing after all.

But however that may be, surely those who have never lost their eager curiosity, never have ceased to be seekers after the unknown, may go right on discovering truth the moment they enter the Elysian Fields. And it will take a long time to discover it all. Tennyson may study his "crannied flower" long and earnestly before he fully knows "what God and man is." William Blake as a mortal may "see the world in a

grain of sand, and a heaven in a wild flower." But Blake the immortal will hardly even yet "hold infinity in the palm of his hand, and eternity in an hour." Children in heaven as on earth will probably go on searching for the end of the rainbow. We have to grow up to discover the beautiful fact that the rainbow has no end.

If heaven does not provide tasks for our explorers, our scientists, our engineers, our captains of industry, some of them at least will set to work to make work. They will invent something useful to do. Dante had no occupation for the saints in Paradise more exciting than debates about scholastic theology with mediaeval ecclesiastics. But talk is not work; it can hardly be called discovery, though the renewal of earthly

acquaintance and the making of new friends may, as hereinafter suggested, be among the principal occupations of the future life. What discoveries in the realm of what we call nature that future may permit, what activities in the investigation and control of force, we cannot even conjecture.

X

THE art of the ultimate future is for artists to imagine. Browning has shown us Abt Vogler dreaming of the music of the future. Kipling has given us his quaint vision of that spacious studio where all the immortal painters of the world's academies shall gather to paint what they choose in the way they like.

"Those that were good shall be happy: they shall sit in a golden chair;
They shall splash at a ten-league canvas with brushes of comet's hair;
They shall find real saints to draw from — Magdalene, Peter, and Paul;
They shall work for an age at a sitting, and never be tired at all.

"And only the Master shall praise us, and only
the Master shall blame;
And no one shall work for money, and no one
shall work for fame.
But each, for the joy of the working, and each,
in his separate star,
Shall draw the Thing as he sees It, for the
God of Things as They are."

Thus we may at least conceive that those who have tried here to represent beauty will try there to work with beauty itself. The musician may work with harmonies impossible for the imperfect instruments of this world. The artist may draw as with the cunning finger of the frost, and paint with the very colors of the sunset. There will perhaps be less copying and more creating. The poet will become once more, as he was when Greece was young, the "maker." St. James tells his early Christian readers

that they are to be "poets of the Logos," or, as we more commonly hear it, "doers of the word, not hearers only." Dead poets who have done with words may help more beautifully, more subtly than others to reveal that Word which was in the beginning. Shelley wrote of the vanished spirit of John Keats, —

> "He is a portion of that loveliness
> Which once he made more lovely."

Celestial architecture figures largely in the quaint visions of the Hebrew Ezekiel and the Christian John; but one fancies they hardly realized that souls need neither roofs nor walls. Architecture is the art of transfiguring the human need for shelter. In the future, like all other arts, it must become pure symbolism. And this will be no

loss but a gain. For psychology teaches us that not in the external world but within the mind are built all those myriad forms of beauty, in form and light and color and sound, of which our earthly arts give us back but faint reflections. Beauty has its objective basis in the symmetries of nature, as music has its basis in the mathematical ratios of tones; but the symmetries and the ratios themselves are subjectively perceived as well as enjoyed. When the time comes that the soul works altogether in the realm of the ideal, unhampered by poor materials and imperfect tools, the arts, which have so long sublimely baffled man, will at last express him and reveal his Maker.

Imagination pauses here, but it does not admit the possibility of a spiritual

world in which the master spirits become the slaves of an eternal paralyzing calm. "What 's come to perfection perishes." There is a touching tribute of Matthew Arnold to his father, Thomas Arnold of Rugby, in the lines entitled "Rugby Chapel." He voices this thought, that there are souls that cannot be happy without endeavor: —

> "O strong soul, by what shore
> Tarriest thou now? For that force,
> Surely, has not been left vain!
> Somewhere, surely, afar,
> In the sounding labor-house vast
> Of being, is practised that strength,
> Zealous, beneficent, firm."

XI

On the other hand, discovery is not the usual occupation of mankind. Abounding energy that would be punished by idleness is not so common that we can shape our thought of the future primarily by it. Not all the good men love work so much that they do not gladly lay them down to sleep. There comes a time when all we want is just to get home and get to bed. There is a deep beauty in the solemn words of the ancient requiem,

"Eternal rest give unto them, O Lord,
And may perpetual light shine ever on them."

How many folded hands have we all seen in our time that seemed content

to be folded forever; how many fast closed eyes that seemed to have seen enough. Rest, the long rest of God's long Sabbath, seemed all that they could have wished. As the Earl of Kent said of the dying Lear,—

> "O let him pass! He hates him
> That would upon the rack of this tough world
> Stretch him out longer."

When we think of the young and the daring, whose great adventure has been transferred to other and broader fields, we are not to forget the weary who wait for release "as a servant that earnestly desireth the shadow." Browning, in his "Old Pictures in Florence," voices this hesitation between a heaven of vaster enterprise and a heaven of repose:—

"There's a fancy some lean to and others hate—
That, when this life is ended, begins
New work for the soul in another state,
Where it strives and gets weary, loses and wins;
Where the strong and the weak, this world's congeries,
Repeat in large what they practised in small,
Through life after life in unlimited series;
Only the scale's to be changed, that's all.

"Yet I hardly know. When a soul has seen
By the means of Evil that Good is best,
And, through earth and its noise, what is heaven's serene, —
When our faith in the same has stood the test —
Why, the child grown man, you burn the rod,
The uses of labor are surely done;
There remaineth a rest for the people of God:
And I have had troubles enough, for one."

This is exceptional rather than characteristic in Browning, who is the poet of the active heaven; but many other

poets have presented to us the contrast between the strenuous life of this world and the future life of surcease. Let us face life cheerfully, even as a long and unrewarding task, they say, if only we may view death as a long repose. Christina Rossetti, for example, gives utterance in lines of haunting beauty to this promise of the rest that comes with the shadow: —

"Does the road wind up-hill all the way?
Yes, to the very end.
Will the day's journey take the whole long day?
From morn to night, my friend.

"But is there for the night a resting-place?
A roof for when the slow, dark hours begin.
May not the darkness hide it from my face?
You cannot miss that inn.

"Shall I meet other wayfarers at night?
Those who have gone before.

Then must I knock, or call when just in sight?
They will not keep you standing at that door.

"Shall I find comfort, travel-sore and weak?
Of labor you shall find the sum.
Will there be beds for me and all who seek?
Yea, beds for all who come."

While, therefore, we have reason to suppose that the future life will be in some degree active, at least for those for whom activity is the highest good, we have no need to fear the forcing of labor upon the weary, or of discovery and adventure upon the perplexed and bewildered soul. For the vast majority of mankind, work in this world means a dull routine in which the soul can have little share; and for them it is not easy to conceive of an active future which can be anything but a perpetua-

tion of irksome toil. All such may rest in the conviction that the future will provide the highest good for each and all. "He giveth unto his beloved sleep."

XII

ARISING naturally out of the thought of the future as giving unbounded opportunities for discovery comes the occupation of discovering old friends, of renewing the severed ties of earthly love and friendship, and of learning to know one another better than earthly barriers permit. This is what most of us think of first when our minds turn with an increasing sense of nearness to the place where so many that were closest to us have preceded us. It was not mentioned first, because it seemed better to begin by trying to get a certain sense of reality and variety into our thought of the future before turning to this purely personal interest. But it

comes up now, and at once we are confronted by many perplexities.

We must assume some kind and degree of recognition as a necessary inference from our starting-point, personal immortality. Persons cannot permanently live alone; if they do, they cease to be in the largest sense persons. We are social beings. Life as we know it is so intricate, so complex an interweaving of human destinies, that so far as we can conceive, the threads can never be wholly disentangled.

A future world in which you and I are individually conscious of ourselves and of God, but just as unconscious as we are now of the presence all around us of invisible spiritual beings, would hardly be personal immortality. For personality requires other persons in

order to realize and to express itself; and life, of which immortality is only the superlative degree, means adjustment to environment. The raising of barriers between personalities is in so far a limitation which, if made absolute, as for example by insanity, brings the paralysis, the apparent negation, of what we call the person. We say of such an unfortunate, "He is not himself." Personal immortality, then, must carry with it, not a multiplication but a removal of barriers. Some have thought of heaven as the world where virtue is instantly recognized by any one that sees it. "Then shall I know even as also I am known."

Apparently some kind of mutual recognition of persons in a spiritual world is a necessary corollary of personal im-

mortality. But it is a very different question whether we shall find it any easier to recognize those we have known in the earthly life than to learn to know the passing stranger. What will be the signs by which soul greets soul? Do you know your friend so well that if you could read his heart you would know him without the familiar features, the friendly smile, the long-remembered voice? There are those who suppose, like the spiritualists, that we shall somehow recognize our loved ones in the future world by a kind of retained visual image of their personal appearance, which will remain associated with the spirit after its departure from the body. Why should we pause upon a point so entirely beyond even possible conjecture? You think of your friend as you

last saw him, years before he died, and perhaps expect to know him by a sort of spiritual image of a man in the vigor of youth. But there are others for whom the image stamped upon memory is the lovely serenity of declining years, the whitening hair, the deeply lined face, the failing strength. It was so they knew him, so they loved him, so only that they would recognize him if spirits are to be known by such signs.

These speculations raise at once so many incongruous and absurd consequences that the healthy mind is apt to brush aside the whole inquiry as inane. Let us pass on, with the remark that if there be any future life, the lives that were really linked here by anything more than the accidents of temporary association will somehow find each other out.

I do not feel sure they will all be discovered easily. One can conceive of many a half-formed soul hurried into eternity and searching long for one whose real life had been infinitely distant from his own, though they had passed their years side by side. When Alcestis went for the second and last time to wander like some white vestal virgin in the gardens of Proserpine, and there was no Hercules to bring her back, Admetus must have been a long time finding her. He may not have known her when they passed; but she would have known him, and taken pity on him. Since 1914 there must have been many a rough Tommy Atkins, many a French chasseur, many a German gunner, whose simple, sinful, loyal soul has risen suddenly from the screaming, cursing earth to the land

where all good soldiers go, who will yet be a long time finding his mother, his sweetheart, when they come. Perhaps the church knew very well what it was about when it introduced the doctrine of purgatory.

Indeed, one wonders whether any but the closest and most spiritual ties, ties rare or unknown in many lives that are lived out here both in cottage and in mansion, can bridge the gulf that parts us all. For, while we like to talk about the coming removal of barriers, and the probability of some kind of future recognition, there is no use in denying that there are mysterious and unfathomable spaces between soul and soul. They are bridged here — or seem to be — by the easy and fallacious intimacies of common life. To have sat side by side, to

have walked together, to have been sheltered by the same roof, fed from the same table, warmed by the same fire —these seem more than they are. Fellowship is something more than to lodge in the same hotel. To suppose that all who have been associated here by the ties of business or of kinship will meet in eternity would be as foolish as to suppose that all the students who now sit together in the classroom will find one another congenial twenty years after graduation.

The real ties may be those deep natural affinities that figure in poetry and romance. Quite as often they are the growth of long years of mutual sacrifice and communion, of deliberate and sometimes difficult sharing and helping, of groundless hopes and useless fears.

They are knit together by the long chain of joys and sorrows, beginnings and ends. They begin in some common thrill at dawn, some hand in hand at sunset; and they lead to twilight together, and darkness severed only by those dreams which cannot be told. Such comrades, though their paths seem always a little apart, come somehow to be one at last; for parallel lines meet at infinity.

Recognition in the future life will not be a cheap, easy prologue to heaven. It will not be over in an hour, or an age. There will be many a quest wherein he who started gayly forth to find his lady will wander long before he finds what he had not sought — the Holy Grail, whereof she is now a humble minister. You thought you knew your brother, your business partner,

your college mate, and look for him among the unready crowd about the gates; but when you find him, he is with one so holy that you see only the shining of his face.

And what of those who die in youth? Do they grow up in heaven? It is hard to think there are no children there, and most of us refuse to believe it. More likely many of those who entered that unseen world in early life remain always children, children in happy heart and simple faith, though growing in wisdom and in grace. Shall we see them as they were, or as they might have been? Are the parents to expect a welcome from one who has still his proud little secrets to confide, his shy and adorable evasions of just praise, his delight in being taken for

granted as a comrade? Or will there be a wise man-soul waiting there, with fulfillment written where promise was before? Is the little one that vanished with the violets to be still the eager child of spring, or will she walk sedately and be queen of the summer? Who knows? And who will not know soon?

XIII

RECOGNITION in the future can hardly be limited to those spirits whom we have chanced to be acquainted with here. A fascinating subject of fanciful speculation in all ages has been the possibility of knowing and learning from the great dead of all the past. I need only refer you to the "Divine Comedy" for innumerable illustrations of it. Peter, on the mount of transfiguration, beholding the spirits of Moses and Elijah talking with his Master, eagerly proposed a longer stay; he would gladly have talked a while himself with those ancient worthies, for they had seen a good deal of life in their day. Every one of us has his heroes in history, in

literature, in the long honor roll of sages and martyrs and saints. If you were offered the chance to choose just five names out of all the good and the wise whose absent souls have been your guides, through those golden words and deeds which they have left behind, and to talk with each but a single hour, would not that hour be worth a year of life? It is a trite saying that as a rule those who go as strangers to visit great men in this world come away disappointed. Emerson explains this; he says: "The young scholar fancies it happiness enough to live with people who can give an inside to the world; without reflecting that they are prisoners, too, of their own thought, and cannot apply themselves to yours."

The imperfect sympathies and the limited time that make hero-worship at close range a dangerous amusement in this life can hardly survive in the future. Here surely discovery as an occupation for eternity will have its widest scope. If it should take us unnumbered years really to know the hearts of those few we have thought we knew already, what can be said of the prospect opened here? Mankind will never cease to be interesting, and a heaven in which there are all kinds of people can never grow dull. Ennui is not to be thought of in a world where Chaucer and Shakespeare and Mark Twain can be just as happy as St. Augustine and John Wesley. Probably the one sort may never fully appreciate the other even in heaven, but fortunate no-

bodies like ourselves can enjoy them all. If one is ever tempted to think that we must some day get to an end of our resources, it is pleasant to remember that all the wisdom, all the wit, all the beauty and bravery of this world, as well as all its saintliness, must go on growing and shining forever if the souls of men do really live beyond the grave. (And if they do not, nothing matters after all, for we shall never know it.)

XIV

ANOTHER occupation of the future may be the education of newly risen souls. Have you ever tried to imagine what it must mean, on the hypothesis of immortality, that during the great war millions of young men have been hurried out of this world into the presence of God? They were without any of that discipline of the spirit that life itself unfailingly imparts. Many of them had never learned, either by victory or by defeat, how really to be men, save in such ways as legs and arms and brains can be called men, until they are shot to pieces. Flesh they knew, and loved it, but not too well; blood they knew, and spilled it—for a flag; but

spirit they knew not, and spirit they are now, or nothing. If anything is left of those boys except a vast decay, it must be a vast ignorance, a blank dismay, an unformed hope, an unanswered question. Who is to teach those murdered soldiers, whose only memorial now is a helmet on a rude cross? Who is to show them how the great war can have brought them into a great but unknown peace?

Are there not guides that wait above the fields of France? Has God no scouts, no sentries posted at his frontiers? Perhaps the barren plains this side of the great divide are paced by the lonely horsemen of the border patrol. They know no more of heaven than just to give the first salute, and to point out the road across the valley of the shadow.

There is among them a Roman centurion who watched the darkness cover Calvary. There are swarthy troopers of Custer's band and Sheridan's brigade. There are the leaders of lost causes, captains of many a forlorn hope, and the forgotten soldiers of many wars. They have been saved so as by fire; and their souls still wait, through all this desolating celestial peace, for one more chance to strike a blow for some cause which they deeply love, and dimly understand. And meanwhile, they can train the raw recruits who are ever rushing forth from the cannon smoke and the horrid din of battle.

And when we are thinking of the education of new souls, what of the children? God will always need some very kind teachers in his kindergarten, for

there is a new class every day. Are there not mothers waiting to meet all the little children that come crying into this world? And shall there not be mothers to meet those that go so quietly and trustfully out of it? There are some women in heaven that could never stand it to see a lost child looking for the way home; they would run to take his little hand and lead him up to God. You don't have to prove that; you know it.

Would you not love to stand there watching for the soul that needs you; the weakness that needs your strength, the weariness that needs your peace, the apprehension that your fuller knowledge can best remove? Perhaps we shall all be teachers in heaven. The least learned of us can somehow keep

a day or two ahead of the freshman class; and none of our pupils will ever forget us when they have learned what little we can teach.

XV

By such an imaginative survey of some of the possible occupations of the future life we have perhaps been led to consider that life as having more points of contact with the present than we had supposed. We have distinguished five activities which seem not only possible but probable in a world of immortal spirits. They are, first, silent influence for good upon the living; second, the discovery of new truth and new beauty in the universe of which heaven is only the spiritual aspect'—the study of celestial philosophy and science and art, pursued for the sheer joy of knowing and of doing, by those to whom learning or action is indispensable to full self-realiz-

ation; third, the renewal of earthly ties of love and friendship; fourth, the making of new friends; and fifth, the education of novices. It would not be difficult to add further illustrations of the general proposition that the future life is a life of progress, of change, of growth, of multiplying contacts and sympathies with the infinite world of the human as well as of the divine.

That such inherently spiritual activities as have been vaguely sketched can be really separated from the Christian view of the future life is obviously impossible. But by avoiding the biblical terminology, by considering what one may perhaps inaccurately call the secular aspects of immortality, we gain perhaps a certain freshness in the point of view, which may appeal to some for

whom matters of faith are quite beyond the realm of the imagination. We may even keep this unusual attitude a little longer, while we inquire what the consequences of such speculations are for our present life.

Our very title is a challenge. It is meant to be a challenge. Living for the future — with what scorn the practical man is apt to receive such a suggestion, when he comprehends that the future we are talking about is the future beyond the grave. What we need, he tells us, is more living for the present, or for the immediate future, and then the distant future will take care of itself. If there is to be any living for the future, he adds, it ought to be mostly that far-sighted morality which may be described as living for the next generation. We are

sure to be accused of having reached, by a different path from that of the older theologians, an other-worldliness which is not only useless but even harmful to social progress.

There is enough truth in the criticism to keep us from any tendency toward over-emphasis of a side of truth which most of the world altogether neglects. It is true that to allow one's mind to dwell over much on curious speculations about the nature of immortality is likely to encourage indifference to the reality and the importance of those battles which we ought now to wage for the morality, the justice, the human brotherhood of the present world. Our business just now is to play the game, while we have a chance. Browning has given us, in his "Epistle of Karshish"

concerning Lazarus of Bethany, a vivid picture of the effect upon the human mind of an unveiled vision of eternity; the daze, the lack of perspective, the dreamy and mystical outlook on a material world no longer regarded as supremely important: —

> "Heaven opened to a soul while yet on earth,
> Earth forced on a soul's use while seeing heaven."

The poems of William Blake and of Emily Dickinson are a sufficient illustration both of the strange, unearthly beauty of a life taken possession of by the power of the world to come, and of the utter inability of such a life to enter into the struggles of its own generation. Poets and prophets may be pardoned if sometimes they see the goal so clearly that they neglect the means; but the rest of

mankind will do well to remember that a little duty done is better than a great ideal unapproached. "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might" is good advice for this world, though it is the advice of an agnostic Hebrew philosopher who had no place in his philosophy for the ethics of immortality. Living for the present, working for proximate ends, seeking to raise the general level of human welfare and happiness an inch or two by practicable means, is rightly esteemed by the majority of thoughtful men to be the best way for society to prepare for whatever heaven may some day be realized on earth.

XVI

But when all that is said, we have a haunting consciousness that what is true for society is not always enough to satisfy the individual heart. Your reform may be worked out twenty, thirty, forty years from now, but where shall you be then? Your scheme for the uplifting of the race may some day triumph, but what is your own outlook into that invisible world where too many of the brightest and best have already gone before their time?

The philosophy of living for the present, in the higher and more unselfish sense, seems entirely adequate in the case of those fortunate men and women who live out the full span of human life,

and fill it with happy and successful and enduring labor for others. But there are more chances of failure than of success for the individual in his attempts to contribute to social progress. A wrong conception of the problem, misguided effort, external hindrances, a premature or a belated start, a lack of resources, the interruptions due to physical limitations, the untimely end of a long, unequal struggle — these make up the history of many a noble and (as we say) ineffective life. As we grow older, and perceive in how small a proportion of the worthier lives about us it can be said that "the end crowns the work," we are moved, not to pessimism, but to a more transcendent faith; a faith that climbs over failure and sees the ultimate success, not alone for the many, but for

the very one who tried and seemed to fail.

The fact is, that none of us is really satisfied, when we first realize that our own larger life-plan is sure to fail, by the assurance that some one else in distant years will achieve what we attempted, that the thing itself will somehow be brought to pass. That is all right for society, but not all right for us; not enough to satisfy us as a final and adequate motive for a victorious life. The physician who gives his life as a sacrifice to demonstrate the cause of a mysterious disease, or to help find a remedy for it, is hailed as a true martyr of science; he has his reward. But what of that much larger number who take equal risks and meet an equally untimely end through some stupid accident, with no

useful result that either they or society can perceive? They need immortality to justify life; they need the future to explain the present.

Living for the future is no coward's philosophy. It is not an ingenious and pious scheme for evading present duty, or explaining away one's failures. Rather is it the inspiration of the weak, the crown and culmination of the strong man's race. The very mention of it brings the sting of shame to the indolent and selfish, of fear to the sensual. Even those who see most clearly and grasp most eagerly the splendid opportunities of the present come sooner or later to the point where they too realize that they have all along been living for the future, and have missed something because they did not know it before.

No, we cannot escape the lure of eternity. We cannot shut out its all too dazzling light. It flashes upon us in some sudden splendor of the morning. It sets us dreaming in broad daylight. Shelley, in his "Adonais," has told us how

> "Life, like a dome of many-colored glass,
> Stains the white radiance of eternity."

But there are times when all the glowing colors of the spectrum, the light and the dark, the solemn and the gay, are fused for an instant by our keener sense, and we are aware of the invisible sun beyond. As Emily Dickinson puts it: —

> "Our lives are Swiss, —
> So still, so cool,
> Till, some odd afternoon,
> The Alps neglect their curtains,
> And we look farther on.

"Italy stands the other side,
While, like a guard between,
The solemn Alps,
The siren Alps,
Forever intervene!"

It was Browning's Bishop Blougram, the worldly and half-cynical ecclesiastic, who told his agnostic companion why we cannot permanently keep our doubts untouched by faith: —

"Just when we are safest, there 's a sunset-touch,
A fancy from a flower-bell, some one's death,
A chorus-ending from Euripides,
And that 's enough for fifty hopes and fears
As old and new at once as nature's self
To rap and knock and enter in our soul."

There is a sense, then, in which we ought to live for this future, about which we know nothing and hope everything. Of such preparedness as belongs to

the distinctly religious view of life and death, it is unnecessary here to speak; just because it is so important that every one remembers it first when such subjects are discussed. There are three other ways, beside reconciling our wills with the divine, by which we may in some degree learn how to live without a body. These three ways are, to live intensely, to live communicatively, and to live helpfully.

XVII

First, because of our probable future we must learn to live intensely. We must pack every day with personality. We must give to every task that permits it as much of ourselves as can be put into it. For in the degree in which we succeed in becoming most thoroughly ourselves, our best selves, in the degree, that is to say, in which the general human stuff in us receives the unique stamp of a distinctive personality, just so far—*and perhaps no further*—we begin to have within us the germ of a possible personal immortality.

It is not every day nor every week that you can be in any large sense personal. You go on for weeks, for months,

sometimes for years, mastering a routine; and then comes the moment when either the routine will master you, or there must be a new start, a creative instant, "a flash of the will that can." You live dully, shallowly, shabbily, apologetically, through a whole winter; and then some fine day winter melts, April shines, something stirs within, and your soul has its chance. It is perhaps the one half-hour in the year when you feel as if you might still begin to be yourself. For part of one golden afternoon your will is free. For a tick of the clock you really see things straight. It is, for the moment, evident to you that your soul lives by these rare intensities, not of mere sentiment or empty aspiration, but of deep resolve and immediate perception of truth. Instead of

regretting now, as you have been used to do, that such moments are so rare, and getting rarer every year, you rejoice that they are still so intense; that life is still so rich, the world so full of beauty; the past so bright, the present so alluring, the future so full of wonder.

> "And I have felt
> A presence that disturbs me with the joy
> Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
> Of something far more deeply interfused,
> Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
> And the round ocean and the living air,
> And the blue sky, and in the mind of man;
> A motion and a spirit, that impels
> All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
> And rolls through all things."

Now the lesson of our study of the future is that there is a sense in which what we are at such moments is the only true self. Accordingly as we then rise

or fall, so the vast colorless spaces of ordinary life are elevated into necessary though uninteresting duty, or depressed into dull failure and unperceived decay. They are the "hours of insight" in which must be willed those tasks which "can be through hours of gloom fulfilled."

These moments of intensity, when personality can be raised to a higher power, are seldom to be had by our seeking. We may indeed cultivate, by such means as our particular form of religion or of philosophy may suggest, the state of mind in which this temporary escape from the prison of the commonplace seems possible. Prayer accomplishes for one what music does for another; a walk in the autumn woods, a quiet afternoon beside the sea, a long talk before an open fire — all these may

help. They have this in common, that they quiet the restless, imperious voices of the petty concerns of life, and make it possible for us to listen to wisdom and destiny. But for the most part the hours of insight come and go without our calling. Our business is to recognize them when they do come, and turn them to account. This is Browning's doctrine of the critical moments of life, as expressed, for example, in these lines:—

"How the world is made for each of us!
How all we perceive and know in it
Tends to some moment's product thus,
When a soul declares itself — to wit,
By its fruit — the thing it does!"

The intenser living that can be called living for the future is assuredly not that glorified selfishness of which modern literature is full, the intense desire and

resolve to get what we want regardless of consequences. A certain type of contemporary verse and fiction tries to throw a glamour over that particularly obnoxious sort of adultery and lawlessness in general that is called "living one's own life." Provided that the hero or heroine is able to feel individual desire so intensely as to be indifferent to the desires or the rights of anybody else, the matter is regarded as somehow raised above the moral law by its dramatic appeal. Naturally we must guard our principle of intensity against all such anti-social sentimentalism. The only intensity that can prepare us for a spiritual future is the intensity of the best.

XVIII

And again, if we are to gain anything in fitness for a world where spirits dwell at once together and apart, we must live communicatively. Our intensity must not be entirely self-centered and concealed. We must share. We must reveal our best. We must, once in a while, speak out. It is true, as we found reason earlier in this discussion to believe, that there ought to be some things we feel and do not tell. That natural reticence which prompts us to say least when the deepest truth is most deeply apprehended is not to be lightly resisted. It is the modesty of the soul, the chastity of the inner life. The best people we know are good enough not to talk too

much, especially about goodness. Perhaps it is not altogether a misfortune that the present generation fears cant more than it fears the devil; for that brazen counterfeit known as cant has always been the devil's most effectual means of keeping gold coin out of circulation.

But this world is so full of false prophets and deluding dreams that when you are sure, you had better tell some one else who is sure — just to see the answering light in his eye. And then you are to risk your peace of mind by telling some one who is not sure, and does not want to be sure. There will be no light in his eye: that is why you tell him. He, poor soul, does not know he needs what you have to give; but you know you need to give it. A suppressed truth is a danger-

ous thing; it may spoil on your hands before you can use it; or it may explode when too much compressed by your careful secrecy; or it may altogether cease to be a truth for you and turn out a lie, to your confusion and dismay.

And when you do try to give away a real truth, whether you find that nobody wants it, or that the crowd is clamoring for it, in either case you cannot after all really give it away. It will not leave you. You give it and keep it too — like happiness, and love, and all other eternal things.

This duty to live communicatively, to reveal and to share whatever spark of the divine fire may have found lodgment with us, is usually urged on the ground of the shortness of life. Richard Watson Gilder, for example, voices it thus: —

"This is my creed,
This be my deed:
'Hide not thy heart';
Soon we depart;
Mortals are all,
A breath, then the pall,
A flash in the dark,
All's done — stiff and stark;
No time for a lie;
The truth, and then die;
Hide not thy heart.

"Forth with thy thought;
Soon 't will be naught,
And thou in thy tomb;
Now is air, now is room.
Down with false shame;
Reck not of fame;
Dread not men's spite;
Quench not thy light.
This be thy creed,
This be thy deed:
'Hide not thy heart.'"

Such a warning as that derives a just solemnity from the fact that, so far as

this world is concerned, if we are to speak out at all, it must be soon. But there is another and less somber aspect in which it appears desirable for us to learn by practice here that difficult art of spiritual communication upon which we shall be altogether dependent by and by. If we do not learn it here, we may learn it there; but perhaps slowly and with infinite difficulty. Even with lips and tongues and eyes and ears, even with the ample resources of human speech and the wonderful arts of writing and printing, it is a very hard thing to transmit a *spiritual* idea from one mind to another. What is it going to be when we live in a world where there is no other way of transmitting a thought than to think it intensely? It is said of the stars, —

"Day unto day uttereth speech,
And night unto night showeth knowledge:
There is no speech nor language;
Their voice cannot be heard."

The stars can talk without words; they do it just by shining. Can we? And if we cannot now, would it not be well to practice a little, while we still have the words?[1]

[1] Moreover, if it should be our duty or our privilege in the future life to attempt what the psychic researchers think many spirits are trying to do, that is, to send thought messages from the other side into this world for some wise and good purpose, then how enormously important it might be that we should be able to share our consciousness with others. Such transmission might be expected to require a very high electric potential, so to speak, to overcome the vast resistance through which it must operate. Many interested but critical investigators of trance mediums and automatic writing are not disposed to regard as entirely conclusive against the genuineness of some of these phenomena the evident trivialities and incoherences mixed in with the more reasonable and interesting material. For, they remind us, we must not forget the stubborn and refractory medium through which a real spirit message, if there be any such thing, must have to pass in using any human mind, even one

Whether we do or do not take the slightest interest in the possibility of the communication of thought across the borderland between the two worlds, we shall certainly need before long all our powers of making ourselves understood by others.

so sensitive as Mrs. Piper's. It has seemed to them that an effort of concentration sufficient to stir a mortal brain with some vague fragments of a genuine message from without might be totally inadequate to avoid a large admixture of nonsense from the medium's own subconscious mind, and perhaps also from the subconscious or conscious minds of the sitters; and this without any intentional fraud or interference on the medium's part. In fact, they point out, there is a certain presumption that the earlier manifestations of genuine psychic phenomena, whether to too incredulous or too credulous investigators, would be fragmentary and obscure, because of this factor of high resistance and inadequate initial force. The analogies of recent scientific progress in the reinforcement of very weak electrical currents in long-distance telephony, and very slight ether vibrations in wireless telegraphy and telephony, show us that this difficulty is serious but not insurmountable in the realm of natural force. Whether it can ever be conquered in the sphere of mind is a question for the next generation.

It may be, of course, that communication will be easier, not harder, in the future. We were led to think, in considering the question of recognition in the future, that barriers will there be lessened rather than multiplied. It is obvious that the polyglot vocal speech of earth will be superseded there by some other means of communicating thought, which may, for all we know, be so much simpler and better than ours that we shall wonder why we ever bothered with the alphabet. But the mere communication of the most elementary ideas is a very different thing from the sharing of spiritual consciousness which is here under consideration.

Every time, therefore, that we succeed in overcoming a false fear, a shal-

low pride, a natural reticence, and in giving out with the personal stamp that truth which we have made our own, we are preparing for a wider ministry here, and perhaps hereafter. The suddenly genuine word in the midst of the social small talk, the deliberate writing of the neglected letter to an old friend in order not to lose the line of communication, the seeking of occasions when one may appropriately, though not easily, raise serious subjects with the casual acquaintance, or even with the stranger — these are ways of keeping alive the spirit of giving away what we have no right to keep.

Yet in all this we are not to forget the caution of one who was all his life very generous with the things which had cost him the most, such as love and

truth. The great Teacher said we were not to waste our souls on useless speech. His words were, "Cast not your pearls before swine."

XIX

To live for the future is, again, to live helpfully. To speak of it sounds trite, for here we seem to be merely echoing the familiar though lofty teaching of ordinary religion and ethics. But in the same special sense as that in which we have considered the future life as a life demanding spiritual intensity and spiritual communication, it must also be a life of spiritual helpfulness. Those same considerations of intelligent preparation for a new state of being which make it desirable to learn to be intensely ourselves, and to share with others the best of our inner life, also demand that we turn with fresh interest and zeal to the working out of the Golden Rule in

the practical problems of daily life. Religion teaches us that we should help because we have been helped, and because all men are our neighbors, our brothers. Ethics teaches us that we should help because we belong to a social order of mutual dependence. The philosophy of immortality teaches us that we do well to learn now how to help, and to find pleasure in helping, because that is probably the principal occupation of eternity.

In considering the possible activities of a spiritual world, we distinguished five: (1) helping the living; (2) discovering new truth; (3) discovering old friends; (4) discovering new friends; (5) educating the new comers in heaven. The first and the fifth are nothing but helping. The discovery of truth and of

old and new friends, so far as it is unselfish and not merely curious, depends chiefly upon the desire to be of use as its motive, and upon sympathy, intellectual and moral, as its method.

Further, the other two kinds of preparation for the future that have just been discussed will not amount to much unless they are dominated by the spirit of helpfulness. For both intensity and the ability to communicate one's thought are, regarded as coldly intellectual powers, within the reach of only a small minority of mankind, and perhaps of comparatively little value in the spiritual progress of the race in this world or any other. To live intensely by sheer force of intellect is possible to one man in a thousand; to live intensely by surrendering oneself unreservedly to the

great tides of love that move both the heavens and the hearts of men is possible to all.

Again, to live communicatively by such intellectual concentration as achieves an efficient transmission of ideas is after all not for the multitude. For most of us, then, intensity, in order to be helpful, must be intensity of love, not of intellect. And the life of spiritual sharing, of communication, is the life in which we learn to understand others, rather than try to make them understand us.

Indeed, the highest helpfulness in this world, and perhaps in the next, is helping other people to be most truly themselves; helping them to express their own imperfect thought, and so to grow; taking for granted in them a virtue which they have by no means shown,

and perhaps do not possess, but which they are thereby led to covet and to acquire. "Our chief want in life is somebody who shall make us do what we can," says Emerson. The strong man does that for himself, both making the standard and holding himself up to it. The rest of us need the stern stimulus of necessity, or the kind incitements of a friend. Such helpfulness as that requires both intensity and communicativeness, and sanctifies them.

Indeed, this third principle of spiritual helpfulness is the corrective for an otherwise pernicious and egoistic self-culture like that of the Oriental mystic, or some of the numerous "new thought" cults of our day. We are not primarily to fit ouselves to be at home and comfortable in the spiritual world of the

future. We are to train ourselves by intensity and by communicativeness for a life of eternal ministry. To mention it is to prove it. How can any one suppose that the need for mutual helpfulness will cease when we pass into a higher sphere? Would it be a higher sphere if that need had disappeared? None of the great poets has thought so. None of the implications of personality points in that direction. And if you and I cannot without a wrench contemplate so simple a programme as that of the Boy Scouts,—"Do a good turn every day,"—how shall we hope to walk without shame among those whose lives are nothing more than wise and happy and unhampered ministry to other lives?

XX

It is time now for us to lay aside altogether the flimsy pretext that the right kind of living for the future can be any other than the right kind of living for the present. That pretext served to whet our interest in a bold flight of fancy at the outset, wherein we tried to reason out what may be and probably are some of the occupations of eternity. We found them to be not unlike the higher and more admirable occupations of this world. Then we undertook, still with the pretense of examining an unfamiliar subject, to see what kinds of preparation for such a world could be enumerated, outside of the well-known religious principles of turning away from sin and

seeking to be reconciled with one's Maker. Having discovered several such methods of learning to live without a body, namely, intensity, communicativeness, and helpfulness, we were about to end the elaborate deductive process with a *Q.E.D.*

And now it dawns upon us that these and all related qualities of character are just as important to our usefulness and happiness in this world as in the next; that every day we practice them, we are better citizens and better neighbors and better friends, as well as better Christians. There remains only the solemn farce of declaring that things which are equal to the same thing are equal to each other. The highest duty of earth is the highest duty of heaven. Life is immortality, when it is the right kind of

life. "Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth." To be truly good is to abolish the dead line between the next twenty, forty, fifty years of life and what follows — to live for the whole of it, expecting no break. And all our study of "living for the future" has only served to show us that there is no other kind of living worthy of the name.

Living for the future is living in such a way that we help to make the future, and the future helps to make us. It is living by faith in ourselves, as the heirs of eternity; in our fellow men, as the companions of eternity; in God, as the Light of all our seeing, the Force of all our better striving, and the Goal of all our journey.

It is well to remember that while reason and analogy have enabled us to

see with a certain clearness and freshness what qualities of character may perhaps be most important in the future, as they are in the present, reason can never give us those qualities. Only life can do that. And the more abundant life comes when to the vision of a boundless eternity is joined the strenuous and solemn energy that comes from the brevity of earthly endeavor. Some of our tasks and some of our privileges must be begun here, or they will never be begun at all; some of the opportunities we miss now, we miss forever. There is no encouragement for the idler, the shirker, the drone. For them it may well be true that "The night cometh when no man can work."

In all that has been said we need not be surprised to find just what we have

been hearing all our lives from the sacred words of Scripture. Probably the professional religious teacher would be eager to point out that this intensity of the inner life, this willingness to share one's deeper thought, this desire to help one's neighbor, are nothing more than other names for prayer and worship and Christian charity. So it is, indeed. We have taken a bypath, and come out on the main road. And in the presence of all the mysteries and the unanswered questions that we have not dared to touch, there is only one word that justifies the confidence that the truth is better than our brightest hopes. That is the word of the only one who really knew anything about it, and who, because he knew, would not tell. He reassured his disciples, not by satisfying

curiosity about the future, but by reminding them that he was going before them into the unseen, and that all would be well. "If it were not so, I would have told you."

XXI

It would seem, then, both from the standpoint of unaided reason and from that of revelation, that the whole duty of man toward the future might be summed up in the three maxims, live intensely — be yourself; live communicatively — give yourself; live helpfully — forget yourself in order to remember others. But there is one thing more that is involved in living for the future, not a duty but a privilege. What is future for us is for the great company of the unseen an eternal present. To them, as they walk their unseen ways, we may lift our hearts in vague but reverent salute, that is something more than memory and something less than prayer.

Browning's "Epilogue" is often misquoted, or rather misinterpreted. We hear the line, "Greet the unseen with a cheer," spoken as if "the unseen" meant the unseen mystery, the unseen event, the unknown morrow — as if the adjective were to be construed with a *neuter* noun understood. But what Browning said was that we should greet with a cheer the unseen *friend*, who in his earthly life

> "never turned his back but marched breast forward,
> Never doubted clouds would break,
> Never dreamed, though right were worsted, wrong would triumph
> Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,
> Sleep to wake."

It is to him, to the poet, the prophet, the hero, to that father, brother, lover, friend of each one of us, who is now unseen but

living somewhere still, that we should raise a cheer. Whether he hears that cheer or not, it ennobles our own unfinished struggle with a glimpse of the goal.

We have a Memorial Day for the departed soldiers of our wars. It is a good day, and should cease to be a holiday in order that it may become a holy day; the last Sunday in May should be celebrated forever, with an increasing perception of its deeper meaning as the last of those who began the observance pass into the unknown. But we need such a day for others than the veterans. We need a day.— perhaps early in November, at about the time when a part of the Christian Church celebrates All Souls' Day — upon which all those who are so disposed may do honor to the Great Majority. In every school and

college and university there might then be recalled the memory of those illustrious alumni whose names now bear the star. We need a Decoration Day when there shall be garlands for the heroes of peace, wreaths for genius, flowers for every unseen friend. This generation needs a day once in the year when boys and girls, and young men and young women, shall be called upon in their several places of assembly to stand up, and look up, and raise the right hand in salute to the departed. At the dinner table on that day the members of the family, the club, might well stand and drink in silence a cup for auld lang syne. The Eucharist in the churches on such a day would take on a new meaning; it would stand for the communion of all souls.

But no such day, no thought that might lie back of it, could ever help us much unless we thought of it as the day not of the dead but of the ever-living. There has been too much living for the past, both in church and state. We have seen dead customs and dead creeds governing the present and fettering and thwarting its life. The memory even of the just is not blessed unless it is linked with hope. In all such reverence as we pay to the lives that seem to have ended, we do well; but in such reverence as we pay by our own better living to those invisible lives that have really just begun, we do far better than we know, better both for them and for ourselves. By living so as to do them honor, by carrying on their unfinished tasks, and by sending up to them now and then the

swift, keen, grateful thought of recognition and companionship, we are, once more, living for the future in such fashion as to make our present wiser and better and more enduring.

XXII

We have come a long way. We have, like Lear, sought to "take upon us the mystery of things, as if we were God's spies." We have followed the daring example of Omar Khayyám, and arrived at his somewhat trite conclusion: —

"I sent my soul through the invisible,
Some letter of that after-life to spell:
And by and by my soul returned to me,
And answered, 'I myself am Heaven and Hell.'"

And like Omar we must all say at last, —

"There was the door to which I found no key;
There was the veil through which I might not see."

Much of the fabric of our vision is in-

deed such stuff as dreams are made on; and perhaps none the worse for that. We have begun with the hypothesis of personal immortality, which is itself in this age a dream to many noble and reverent minds. And upon that we have built our airy towers and pinnacles of inference and speculation, all in a vain effort to guess what man was never made to know. It is, when so considered, from the angle of mere reason and demonstration, indeed a dream. Perhaps life itself is a dream, from which some never wake. But a good deal depends on what sort of dream we have, both of this frail mortality that we know so well, and of that unimaginable morning "when we dead awake," if the dream comes true. That strange and brilliant but unfortunate English poet, Thomas Lovell Bed-

does, asks us all a searching question when he inquires,—

> "If there were dreams for sale,
> What would you buy?"

But dreams are not for sale.

XXIII

As the years go, life in an age like this becomes more and more largely either an admiration or a despair. By such an admiration as comes from the contemplation of the immortals, we may escape the dullness, the pettiness, the weariness, that the passing of youth so easily leaves behind. See how they march in victory; behold how they rest in peace. Remember their long striving, and consider their perfect calm. Ponder the deep secret of their coming hither, and of their going hence. But demand not that they return.

For perhaps we are not to look for any experimental confirmation of our hope of immortality, save such confir-

mation as comes from living in that hope. Commune with the earth, whence man arises, and whither he seems to return. Salute the sky, where light resides, and where all vapors pass away. Ask of them both, of the earth his mother and of the sky his father, what they have done with him now; and they will answer only with the harvest, and with the dawn. He is, they intimate, neither a flower nor a star, that they should bring him back in his season. He came; he is gone; he comes no more, is not to be repeated. The scattered fragments of Osiris are not to be recovered beneath the sun; if he shines again, it will not be here. The faithful Isis buried all of him that she could find, but one thing escaped her and so could not be buried, and that — was Osiris. "What is man, that thou

art mindful of him?" That which we know most surely about him is, that he departs.

But out of his buildings looks a soul; under his music sings a deep desire; between the dusty pages of his forgotten books there is a breath of spring. By men he is soon forgotten; by the earth at last disowned, because even as dust he ceases to be fertile; by the sky rejected, because he is too much lighter than the air. It is as though he were not; yet we know that he has a home, and that it is we that wander.

> "Nothing of him that doth fade
> But doth suffer a sea-change
> Into something rich and strange."

Consider then this mystery: that neither in the earth nor in the sky can you find that brave Spirit of the man, which

he truly was, and is, and shall be when all flesh has passed away. And having found him not, revere him; because, like Eternity, of which he is a part, he must for what remains of Time elude you and lead you onward, in a quest that is its own reward. "Greet the unseen with a cheer." For to greet the unseen, to recognize the reality of spirit and the supremacy of love, *is* immortality.

A SONG FOR ALL SOULS

I

Sing for the brave whom men revere,
The brave whom no man knows,
Who face the dark and conquer fear,
Confronting unknown foes;
Sing for the brave.

Sing for the loyal and the true,
The silent souls obscure,
Who waver not the long years through,
The steadfast and the sure:
Sing for the true.

Sing for the gentle and the kind,
The merciful, the tender,
Who guide the erring, light the blind,
And all for love surrender:
Sing for the kind.

II

Sing for the dead who died for love,
Whose life was but a song,
Red is the rose their graves above,
Green is the grass and long:
Sing for the dead.

Sing for the dead who died forlorn,
The dead who died in glory.
Tell for the children yet unborn
Their old, forgotten story:
Sing for the dead.

Sing for the dead who died to save
Freedom and fatherland.
They knew not why they had to die,
But now they understand:
Sing for the dead.

Sing for the dead; they cannot sing
What our gross ears can hear.
Echo the songs they fain would bring.
Sing, for the dead are near—so near:
Sing for the dead.

III

Sing for the dead, the unfulfilled,
The child, the youth, the bride;
The poet's voice too early stilled;
Dreams unfinished, and hopes denied;
Beauty and pride the grave doth hide:
Sing for the unfulfilled.

Sing for the dead that tried and failed,
Or never tried at all;
Who lived in vain through peril and pain,
Fell, and never got up again,
And suddenly heard the last great call:
Sing for them all.

Sing for the day that is over at last,
Sing for the resting bed;
Sing for release, sing for peace,
Sing for rest that is last and best,
Sing for sleep that is long and deep;
Sing for the silent dead.

IV

Sing soft and low;
Do they hear? Do they know?
We come and we go,
But they stay.
Life laughs and weeps;
Death sleeps.
Life loves and hates;
Death waits.
Life sings and sighs;
Death 's wise.
No surprise,

No fear comes here,
No war any more,
No day, no night.
All 's well, all 's right,
All 's finished at last;
Debts paid, danger past.
Sun 's in the west;
Let them rest
With the sun;
Day 's done.

V

Sing for the lost whom God has found
Beneath the land and sea.
The souls astray have found their way
Back to the light of the endless day,
Back to eternity.
He called the armies under ground;
From sunken ships he called the drowned;

Lost souls rose when they heard that
sound.
Sing for the lost and found.

Sing for the living that cannot die,
Because they know the way
To cross the sea and pierce the sky;
For brains wear out, but souls can fly
Through night to find the day.
Sing for the lives that rise and soar,
Sing for the souls that die no more,
Sing for the everlasting shore
Beyond the restless sea.

Sing for the free, wherever they be,
In this world or a better,
Whose spirits bold no chain can hold,
No past enthrall, no fate enfold,
Whose life no death can fetter;

Whose souls arise before our eyes
From prison cells to Paradise:
Sing for the free,
Wherever they be.
Sing for all souls!
Sing!

PRAYERS FOR THE ETERNAL LIFE

I

O THOU who hast set eternity in the heart of man, and hast made us all seekers after that which we can never find, forbid us to be satisfied with life. Draw us away from base content, and set our eyes on far-off things. Keep us at tasks too hard for us, that we may be driven to Thee for strength. Deliver us from fretfulness and self-pity. Make us sure of the goal we cannot see, and of the hidden good in the world. Open our eyes to beauty by the way, and our hearts to the loveliness men hide from us because we do not trust them enough. Bind us by fast bonds to the brother-

hood of those who love Thee better than they know, who serve Thee in the darkness, and even in their doubts will never give Thee up. Shine Thou upon us with such light as we can bear. Show us such truth as we can understand and obey. Save us from ourselves, and fill our hearts with the vision of a world made new. Help us to desire no reward but the utter freeing of our souls from the bonds of flesh when the days of our years on the earth are fulfilled.

II

O Everlasting Father, steady us in the midst of a changing world. We have lost our fatherland, and have not found the land beyond the sea. Our hearts are restless and athirst for the living God, who made us what we are. But Thou,

O Lord, art steadfast and unshaken. We know that Thou art the Master of all things visible and invisible, and that there is none among all the powers of evil that can withstand Thee. Quiet our nameless fears, drive out the dread of death, and of a dreary, helpless life after death. Grant to us a hope of immortality that shall not vanish in shadows when our sun is setting. Show us an invisible world far better than men have dreamed of or desired, and a light too bright for mortal eyes. We ask not for a heaven wherein to be made happy, but only to have more time to do the tasks we have failed in here, and to learn how to be free. Deliver us from haste and dismay, and set our daily life before us in the quiet light of eternity.

III

O Thou who art the shepherd of all wandering souls, we who have loved too few, and none aright, beseech Thee to teach us compassion. Show us the hungry hearts of men and women, turned bitter with long waiting, that with understanding we may love those who love us not. Blot out of our remembrance all harsh words, and make us ever mindful of the hidden pain that others must endure. To all weakness that men bear as a burden from the past make us very merciful. To all defect of love in those who have never been loved make us forgiving, when we remember how richly we have been forgiven. Show us the hidden tragedies and the hidden heroisms of those whom

we have thought to be our enemies. Help us to look upon the thwarted souls of men in the days of their life as we shall look upon their still faces in the day of their death, in order that now, rather than then, understanding all we may forgive all.

IV

We thank Thee, O God, for light after darkness, and for the endless renewing of life. Thou that art never weary of setting us free from the bonds wherewith we have bound ourselves, make us to walk abroad in this new day without fear, or any kind of bondage. Teach us to enter humbly into the heritage of truth won for us by saints and martyrs of old, that their sacrifice may not have been in vain,

but that they, being perfected in us, may be glad after all their griefs. Open our eyes to perceive new light, and our ears to hear the new voices of the age that is calling us. Show us how to help men and women to be more truly themselves. Fit us for the life that is awaiting us in the new kingdom of heaven upon earth that is near at hand. And may we gladly give up all things for that.

V

O Thou who art the Father of all the faithful, give us the great gift of faith. Help us always to believe in the best that we know, and the best that our hearts have hoped for. And may we never be utterly cast down when we look upon the ruins of our happiness,

or the failure of all our strivings after goodness. Bid us then arise in patience and good cheer to take up the broken task once more, to rebuild the eternal mansion-house of God in the midst of our vanishing days. And so teach us that by our daily failures we may learn how to outlast Time, to rescue from decay and oblivion all that is best and loveliest and most fleeting, and to become true citizens of the kingdom of heaven that passeth not away.

THE END

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